

Issue:
SPRING - SUMMER 2008

Red Rock CANYON

Keystone Visitor Guide

NATIONAL CONSERVATION AREA

Flower Power

DESERT PLANTS ARE RESILIENT AND THEIR ADAPTATIONS FOR SURVIVING DESERT CONDITIONS ARE DIVERSE AND AMAZING. A KEY TO PLANT SURVIVAL IS THE ABILITY TO REPRODUCE. THE REPRODUCTION OF MOST ANNUAL AND PERENNIAL SPECIES IS DEPENDENT ON THE POWER OF THE FLOWER!

The male parts of a flower are specialized to produce spores or pollen. Spores or pollen from the anther at the end of the stamen must find their way to the stigma. The female stigma is the surface on which spores or pollen must land (or be placed) during pollination. Here the spores germinate and travel down the style of the pistil where fertilization takes place.

Pollen transfers from stamen to stigma in three ways: self-pollination, animal pollination and wind pollination. The process of self-pollination occurs when the pollen from an anther fertilizes an egg on the same flower. Wind pollination is a primitive method and generally occurs among plants that live close together such as grasses and trees. Tremendous amounts of pollen are released to ensure that at least some wind borne spores make it to the correct stigma.

Spring flowers put on their annual show to attract animal pollinators from bees to hummingbirds. The colors and designs of flowers have developed over time to attract specific animals that fulfill their reproductive needs. Look into a Utah penstemon blossom and you will see patterns of

have reliable partnerships. The yucca moth pollinates the yucca flower while she lays her eggs. In turn for her good deed, the moth larva can feed on the developing seeds.

This spring, take a closer look at the attractive power of Red Rock Canyon's desert flowers. From April to June, you may see desert marigolds and globe mallow throughout the area. Firecracker penstemon, small leaf amsonia and scarlet gaura will dress up Pine Creek Canyon. Lost Creek and Willow Springs will show off dune primrose, chia, prickly pear cactus, larkspur, and Fremont phacelia. Spring and early summer are your best chances to experience the beauty of the Mojave Desert in bloom. So get out the camera, take a hike and watch the desert change before your very eyes through the power of flowers.



Photo: Apache Plume
by Edna Campbell

color called "nectar guides." These guides are essentially runways with landing lights that lead the pollinator right to the nectar. Some flowers are generalists and do not care which animal pollinates them, while others

Don't Trash Nevada

Millions of visitors go to Southern Nevada's public lands to enjoy their beauty and recreational opportunities. However, the tremendous growth has had a negative impact on public lands, with littering and illegal dumping occurring more often.

What you can do: Do not engage the dumper in any way. Simply record the pertinent information and provide it to the appropriate authorities.

- | | |
|------------------------|---------------------------|
| ▣ Incident Date | ▣ Incident Location |
| ▣ Incident Time | ▣ Violator's Description |
| ▣ License Plate Number | ▣ Material Dumped |
| ▣ Vehicle Description | ▣ Other Important Details |

To learn more, visit www.DontTrashNevada.org

Hours of Operation

April 1 through September 30, 2008

- ◆ **Visitor Center**
8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
- ◆ **13-Mile Scenic Drive and Scenic Overlook on State Route 159**
6 a.m. to 8 p.m.



Photo: Staghorn Cholla (*Opuntia versicolor*)
by Carol Gamet

What's Inside

- [2] Rattlesnakes, Burros
- [3] SNPLMA, New Visitor Center, Fees and Annual Passes
- [4] Rock Climbing, Calico Tanks Trail
- [5] Red Rock Partners
- [6] Fire Ecology, Petroglyphs and Pictographs, Desert Safety Tips, Why are the Rocks Red
- [7] Hike Descriptions
- [8] Hiking Map, Contact Numbers

Photo: Chia (*Salvia columbariae*)

